

**Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)
Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)
WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE
SITUATION REPORT # 13
1600 Hours October 20, 2005**

New Information in Bold Italics

***Next Conference Call is scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2005, 0930 hours
Information for Situation Report should be submitted to the VEOC no later than 1000 hours daily***

WEATHER

Forecast: ***Southwest VA: Partly cloudy, High temperatures in the mid to upper 70's, Low temperatures in the mid to upper 50's with winds W at 10 MPH or less. A 20% chance of showers late in the afternoon increasing to 40% overnight.***

NWS Morristown TN Short-term forecast indicates 20% chance of precipitation beginning Thursday, 20 October with a 50% to 60% on Friday, 21 October and Saturday morning, 22 October. Chance of precipitation Saturday evening, 22 October through Monday evening is 30% decreasing to 10% on Wednesday, 26 October.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation: The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

State of Emergency: On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage.

Executive Order 99 (2005) has been amended to impose an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap, effective immediately and continuing until such time as local officials advise the Governor it should be lifted.

Local Situation: Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

Local Emergency Declared: Scott County declared a local emergency on October 15, 2005, specifying agricultural drought. There is no indication that this situation will impact the provision of 250,000 gallons of water per day by Scott County to Big Stone Gap.

STATE AGENCIES

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

A VDEM Hazardous Materials Officer is coordinating with Wise County, the Town of Big Stone Gap, and state/local agencies to identify needed resources and continue logistical support. A VDEM Reservist is on site at the Wise County Command Post to assist with logistics and finance.

The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies and compiling a list of available resources.

The VEOC is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

VDH is preparing kits for personal care workers, and supplying home delivered meals that contain water suitable for disabled populations, baby wipes and sanitizer.

The Virginia Department of Health Roanoke Regional Public Information Officer (PIO) is on scene to coordinate public information dissemination.

The Office of Drinking Water has offered to help the Town of Big Stone Gap test water. Water tests are ongoing. Additional samples were taken to test for sodium levels. Until further notice, the boil water notice is still in effect for the Central area of the town.

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has been put on alert for possible activation to assist the special needs shelter.

Three Public Service Announcements were translated into Spanish yesterday for distribution in BSG. Follow-up press release issued clarifying the elevated sodium in the water in parts of Big Stone Gap and giving comparisons to sodium content of other beverages specifically Pepsi, Coke, Diet Pepsi, Diet Coke, 7 Up, Propel, and Gatorade—all of which are higher in sodium than the water.

Receiving reports daily from Big Stone Gap Water Treatment Plant on water monitoring from blivets and other stored water supplies.

VDH is encouraging local hotels to remain connected to the towns water supply.

The local health department began active surveillance for vomiting/diarrhea illnesses; monitoring absentees at 3 schools in Big Stone Gap daily, comparing with other county schools. No increase noted at this time.

The Office of Drinking Water has identified two wells in Appalachia as emergency water supply sources for town of Appalachia.

Virginia National Guard (VNG)

The VNG continues distribution and blivet support mission. The nine blivets are placed at the following locations: one at each of the three public schools, one at the Hospital, one at the Nursing Home, one serving the community college/DMME, one at the Special Needs Shelter, and two supporting the Portable Water Processing Plants.

Additionally, one blivet tasked to go to Bullitt Park. The VNG is maintaining the blivets. Health department has certified water quality.

A plan has been implemented to replace the pump at the cave site due to it failing last night at 2320 hrs. A new pump will arrive Friday morning. Sixteen soldiers remain on mission. Sheriff Deputies will be guarding blivets 30-31 OCT 05.

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Monitoring Powel River water flow. The river should not be lost as a source, yet the amount withdrawn will decrease the water level. DEQ can reconsider the 10% drawdown limit, if needed and requested, but should be a last resort. The water level is bouncing between 15-16 cubic feet per second or approximately 9.69-10.33 million gallons per day.

State Fire Marshal's Office

The State Fire Marshal's Office contacted 12 building owners with sprinkler systems fed by Big Stone Gap as identified by the VDEM/Big Stone Gap task group. Faxed and/or mailed these building owners a Question and Answer sheet on what to do and who to contact should they lose water supply to their sprinkler system.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The VDOC is refilling blivets and have successfully transported one million gallons of water per week by tanker to the affected areas.

Powell Valley Primary, Middle and High Schools will be topped-off every weekend. An on-site water level check of the three blivet sites will be conducted **today** to gauge daily water consumption.

WRSP also committed to transport an additional 200,000 gallons of water weekly to support the residents on Wallens Ridge Mountain.

DOC providing the Town with 200,000 gallons from tank at Wallens Ridge for use at DMME and MECC.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

VDOT has 4 message boards in the Big Stone Gap area.

A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

Department of General Services/Consolidated Labs

VDGS/CL processed 2 water samples today. Test results from the cave and Clinch Haven Farm well were distributed on October 19. Clinch Haven Farm well test results were good, however, additional bacteriological tests are being conducted, expect results 21 or 22 Oct.

Virginia Department of Forestry

The VDOF is putting up signs and enforcing the burn ban placed into effect by the Governor in the town limits of Big Stone Gap and the County of Wise. The VDOF will also enforce the burn ban for those areas of Big Stone Gap that are within Scott County.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

The Town of Big Stone Gap installed a 6-inch water line connecting to the Town of Appalachia's water system. ***The 24-hour sanitization process began October 19. The system should be on-line by Friday or Saturday of this week. A second plant arrived today with a projected operational date of Saturday, October 22.***

Town officials and the VDH are discouraging private individuals from purchasing private tanks. If they choose to purchase a private water tank they must break their connection to the town water supply in order to eliminate cross contamination.

The Clinch Haven Farm well is projected to produce 100,000 to 125,000 gallons per day. Hairy Hole Cave test results were good; pumping water will resume on Friday, October 21.

VA Rural Water Association circuit riders arrived 19 Oct and identified three possible leaks in the system. Investigation and examination of system continues.

A distribution site opened at Town Hall October 18, 2005 to distribute bottled water to low-income individuals on a low sodium diet. Three gallons per family, for low-sodium diets. Distribution daily from 2 PM – 8 PM and will end 21 October. In four hours 2100 gallons were distributed. The distribution method is in the process of being reevaluated.

Mt. Empire Older Citizen organization delivering bottled water to citizens with no transportation as well as special needs citizens.

The Town identified a spring, Parsons Cave, near water treatment plant as resource to serve as a back-up supply system. Water samples to be collected 24 October.